

REMARKS

Withdrawn claims 1-3, 9, 10, 12-22, 31-38, 41-46 and 50-67 are cancelled herewith. Claims 39 and 42-46 are currently amended and claims 68-74 are new. The amendments to the claims and the new claims are fully supported by the Specification, e.g., at page 15, line 22 through page 16, line 18. No new matter has been added.

Claims 39, 41-43 have been rejected as being anticipated by Kenney, U.S. Patent No. 5,725,928 ("Kenney"). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection for the following reasons.

Independent claim 39 features a method of making a touch fastener. As amended, the method requires, in pertinent part, forming a composite polymeric sheet including a plurality of *side-by-side lanes*. The composite polymeric sheet includes a lane that includes a first polymeric material and a lane that includes a second polymeric material which is foamed.

The Examiner states that Kenney discloses at column 3, lines 25-40 that a plurality of side-by-side layers/lanes can be formed by bonding/laminating or coextrusion. Applicants do not agree that Kenney discloses side-by-side lanes. Figure 8 (reproduced below) of Kenney makes it clear that he only describes a layered, sheet-on-top-of-sheet structure, and not a side-by-side structure in the sense disclosed by the Applicants. As amended, claim 39 requires forming a composite polymeric sheet including a plurality of *side-by-side lanes*. Such side-by-side lanes are different than Kenney's layer structures. With this distinction, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 39, and all claims that depend therefrom are novel over Kenney.

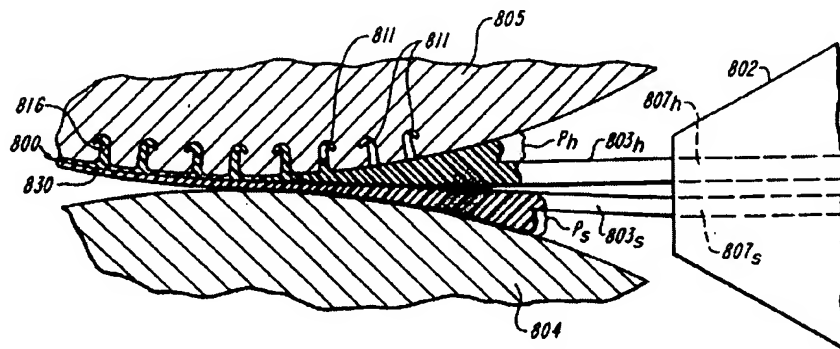


FIG. 8

Claims 44-46 have been rejected as being obvious over Kenney. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection for at least the following reasons.

Generally, Applicants' methods produce fasteners that are stretchable, e.g., in the cross-machine direction (e.g., see Figs. 8F and 8G of the present disclosure), which enables strong engagement with loops, even after repeated use. For example, such stretchable fasteners can be used on diapers to prevent inadvertent disengagement. In addition, Applicants' methods also produce fasteners that have soft edges, e.g., that reduce discomfort to the wearer (e.g., see Fig. 15B of the present disclosure).

In contrast, Kenney is directed to molded-in touch fasteners, e.g., that can be molded into a foam seat cushion used in the assembly of automobile seats. Kenney is generally trying to solve the problem of preventing intrusion of a foam material into fastener elements during injection of such a material into a mold to form a foam object such as a foam bun. As Kenney explains, such foam intrusion can foul the fasteners and prevent proper engagement.

A person of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to modify Kenney's layered, sheet-on-top-of-sheet structure to provide the Applicant's fasteners having *side-by-side lanes* because there is simply no suggestion in Kenney that it would be desirable to do so. As a result, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 44-46 are non-obvious over Kenney for at least the reason that they depend from a non-obvious base claim.

Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are patentable over the art of record, and respectfully request a Notice of Allowance.

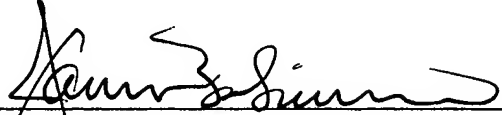
Enclosed is a \$120.00 check for the Petition for Extension of Time fee. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050, referencing Attorney Docket No. 05918-294001.

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Respectfully submitted,

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